

**Request for Public Comment on the South Carolina
Agricultural Outreach Plan
Program Year 2012**

The South Carolina Department of Employment and Workforce, State administrative entity for the Workforce Investment Act and Wagner-Peyser Act, invites public comment regarding the US Department of Labor (USDOL) required annual Agricultural Outreach Plan (AOP). The AOP describes the activities planned for providing services to the agricultural community both migrant and seasonal farmworkers (MSFWs) and agricultural employers. In the past, the AOP was submitted as a separate plan to USDOL but will now be included in South Carolina's Program Year 2012-2016 Integrated Workforce Plan, which will also be available for public comment in the coming weeks.

In order to garner as much input as possible, please forward this public notice to other partners whom have an interest in optimally serving migrant and seasonal farmworkers and agricultural employers. Comments or questions on the Agricultural Outreach Plan can be sent to the below address but are preferred to be sent electronically to Maria Trammell, State Monitor Advocate, at mtrammell@dew.sc.gov no later than 5:00 pm on Monday, August 20, 2012. Comments will be reviewed and added to the plan as appropriate.

Submit any comments regarding this plan to:
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Agricultural Outreach Plan Program Year (PY) 2012

A. Assessment of Need

Agriculture has long been an important part of South Carolina's economy. The industry has a tremendous direct and indirect economic impact on the state. In 2010, the value of total agricultural production, crops and livestock combined, totaled \$2.4 billion, ranking South Carolina 35th in the nation. Crop production was \$1.0 billion, and livestock was \$1.4 billion. South Carolina's top 10 commodities are shown below.

South Carolina Top 10 Commodities				
Items	Value of receipts	Percent of total receipts	Percent of U.S. value	Value of U.S. receipts
Broilers	750,426	31.5	3.2	23,696,132
Turkeys	262,050	11.0	6.0	4,371,378
Greenhouse/nursery	248,318	10.4	1.6	15,584,823
Cattle and calves	129,513	5.4	0.3	51,531,014
Corn	128,700	5.4	0.3	44,768,644
Soybeans	121,652	5.1	0.4	33,169,674
Cotton	114,878	4.8	1.8	6,266,559
Peaches	98,130	4.1	16.0	614,908
Chicken eggs	86,243	3.6	1.3	6,472,778
Tobacco	63,360	2.7	5.1	1,246,570

Source: USDA, Economic Research Service. Data as of 07/19/12.

South Carolina remains the largest fresh market peach producer in the United States. It trails California in total peach production, with the bulk of California's crop being processing of peaches. During typical years this industry employs approximately 3,000 individuals in South Carolina, of which about three-fourths are H-2A workers.

Tobacco acreage has decreased some in recent years, but South Carolina still ranks fifth in the nation in tobacco production. Approximately 2,000 plus people work in this industry. About 1,500 individuals worked in the cucumber harvest (pickles) in program year 2011 with cucumber acreage continuing to increase. Tomato acreage remains about the same. Approximately 2,500 acres are farmed and around 1,600 workers are employed.

South Carolina ranks second nationally in the production of collards and other table greens. Approximately 1,000 people work in these crops annually. Watermelon production continues to increase and revenues grew over 40% in program year 2011. The cultivation of cantaloupe and

peppers also showed some increases in acreage. In South Carolina, 700-1,000 people work annually in the production of melons, cantaloupes and peppers. The growth in the ‘pickle’ cucumbers industry and some additional tobacco planting will put pressure on the existing local and seasonal farm labor supply. The Pee Dee Region will perhaps have the greatest need for MSFWs in the coming season. Labor demand will remain about the same in the Lowcountry.

In PY 2012, the number of H-2A workers is expected to grow. The peach and strawberry industries continue to increase the size of the H-2A worker program. Other specialty crops, as well as nursery and greenhouse work, have also contributed to the increase. These activities are primarily in the Savannah Ridge and Piedmont areas.

Overall, the projected agricultural workforce need for South Carolina in program year 2012 is approximately 11,000 workers. This is the same number of workers that was needed in program year 2011. It is anticipated that the number of agricultural job openings received by our Agency will drop from the 12,000 to about 9,000. This total includes 3,080 H-2A and approximately 6,000 migrant and seasonal farm workers. The number of domestic MSFWs in South Carolina is difficult to estimate and could be understated as some of these workers cannot be located.

Estimated Number of MSFW and H-2A Workers PY 2012		
Area	Estimated MSFWs	Estimated H-2As
Beaufort	900	675
Charleston	900	135
Greenwood	800	1599
Kingstree	1,200	81
Spartanburg	1,000	392
Sumter	1,200	198
TOTAL	6,000	3080

B. Outreach Activities

The South Carolina Department of Employment and Workforce (SCDEW) will conduct outreach services to the agricultural workers with Agency outreach staff stationed in six designated significant offices. Other public and private community service agencies and migrant and seasonal farm worker groups will also provide outreach services. The six significant offices (Beaufort, Charleston, Greenwood, Kingstree, Spartanburg, and Sumter) are located in SC Works Centers, with the exception of Charleston, and serve as hub offices for MSFW outreach to surrounding areas.

A map of South Carolina counties, color-coded into six regions. The regions are defined by the following counties and colors:

- Beaufort Area (Grey):** Beaufort, Jasper, Hampton, Allendale, Barnwell.
- Charleston Area (Blue):** Charleston, Colleton, Dorchester, Berkeley, Orangeburg, Calhoun.
- Greenwood Area (Green):** Greenwood, Edgefield, Lexington, Aiken, McCormick, Saluda, Newberry.
- Kingstree Area (Purple):** Marion, Dillon, Horry, Georgetown, Williamsburg.
- Spartanburg Area (Yellow):** Spartanburg, Union, York, Chester, Fairfield, Lancaster, Chesterfield, Darlington, Florence, Lee, Sumter, Richland.
- Sumter Area (Red):** Sumter, Richland, Calhoun, Clarendon, Williamsburg, Georgetown.

Other counties shown include Oconee, Pickens, Greenville, Cherokee, Anderson, Laurens, Abbeville, and Marion. The map also shows the Atlantic Ocean to the east and the Georgia border to the south.

Vigorous outreach activities will be conducted to ensure that migrant and seasonal farmworkers are aware of the full range of employment services. SCDEW outreach workers and the Rural Manpower staff will work together to coordinate outreach activities, thus maximizing program effectiveness and efficiency. Statewide, there will be six, full-time outreach worker positions dedicated to outreach activities. MSFW outreach and staff, as well as Rural Manpower staff, will be primarily supported through Wagner-Peyser funding. The estimated number of MSFWs to be contacted by each outreach worker per area is listed below. Due to the varying concentrations of MSFWs in the different areas, some movement of outreach workers between areas will be necessary.

**Movement of outreach workers between areas will be required.*

SCDEW will partner with other agencies across the state of South Carolina that also target the MSFW population, such organizations include the SC Workforce Investment Act (WIA) 167 Grantee - Telamon Corporation, South Carolina Legal Services, South Carolina Department of Education Migrant Education Program, migrant health clinics, and faith-based migrant community organizations and associations. The agency will work closely with Telamon, a major partner, to establish a memorandum of understanding (MOU) that will enhance the partnership, identify resource sharing opportunities, and find better ways to leverage federal resources.

In addition, staff will continue to foster cooperation with other governmental and community-based organizations in providing information and promoting the MSFW program at appropriate meetings and through other avenues. Both the State Monitor Advocate and the Rural Manpower supervisor serve on the USDOL Wage & Hour Farm Labor Coordinating Task Force which provides a forum for farmworker and labor partners and stakeholders to share information. The State Monitor Advocate is also a member of the South Carolina Primary Health Care Association Advisory Council.

SCDEW will comply with CFR 20 653.107, Sub-part B, in delivering services to MSFWs. The roles and responsibilities of the outreach worker are as follows.

- Contact and locate the MSFWs where they work, live or gather
- Observe the work and living conditions
- Explain the services available
- Provide information about the job service complaint system and assist in the preparation of a worker complaint
- Explain basic farmworker rights when the outreach worker refers an MSFW to a job (20 CFR 653 and 658)
- Refer to job openings and assist in the preparation of a work application
- Refer to supportive services, if needed
- Assist in making appointments

The farmworkers will be contacted at their living, gathering or other assembly areas by outreach workers. An explanation of workforce services available to MSFWs, including the availability of referrals to agricultural and nonagricultural employment, training, and supportive services, and other job development services will be provided in a language readily understood by them. MSFW outreach workers are required to be bilingual and provide language appropriate services as needed. MSFWs will also be provided with information about other area organizations available to serve them.

Each outreach worker will maintain a log of daily contacts which will include the number of MSFWs contacted and details of assistance provided. The name of the individual contacted will be recorded in all cases where an application for work is taken, a referral to a job is made, and/or a complaint is filed. Detailed reports relative to the number of MSFWs, their office of registration, and services provided can be retrieved through the reporting module in SC Works Online Services (SCWOS), the data management, service delivery system for WIA, Wagener-Peyser, and Trade Adjustment Assistance. The “Notice to Job Seekers” which lists the services available through the SC Works Centers and the toll-free farmworker helpline flyers will be distributed to all MSFWs contacted.

Outreach workers will be familiar with working and living conditions of the migrant and seasonal farmworkers. If they observe, have reason to believe, or are in receipt of information regarding a suspected violation of employment related laws or employment service regulations by an employer, the outreach worker shall document the suspected violation and provide the information to the SC Works Center DEW Staff Manager and overseeing Area Director. SC Works Center DEW Staff Manager and Area Director will provide assistance in the preparation of job service and non job service complaints. Complaints will be recorded using the Employment Services (ES) Complaint Log and resolved using the ES Complaint System.

C. Services Provided to MSFWs through the SC Works Center Delivery System

SCDEW's outreach program will focus on increasing MSFWs' ability to access core, intensive and training services through SC Works Centers. Outreach workers will inform MSFWs of and refer them to verified employment opportunities and the ES Complaint System. Outreach workers will encourage the MSFWs to go to the SC Works Centers to obtain the full range of employment services; however, on-site assistance will also be offered in the preparation of applications, on a limited basis. Outreach workers will refer individual MSFWs, or family members, who may be eligible, to WIA and supportive services and, as needed, will provide assistance in making appointments and arranging transportation to and from SC Works Centers or other appropriate agencies. Further, the outreach workers will make follow-up contacts as necessary and appropriate to provide, to the maximum extent possible, the foregoing described services.

In the SC Works Centers throughout the state, bilingual staff members work with MSFWs of limited English proficiency to provide core and intensive services. When no qualified and trained bilingual employee is available, the SCDEW will offer and secure, at no cost to the client, a qualified interpreter or translator service. If there is a need for remedial and/or occupational training, the limited English proficiency MSFW is generally referred to a local Adult Education office, first, for an "English as a Second Language" course, then is referred to a training provider. Telamon is also a partner of the SC Works Centers and provides additional services to migrants and seasonal farmworkers.

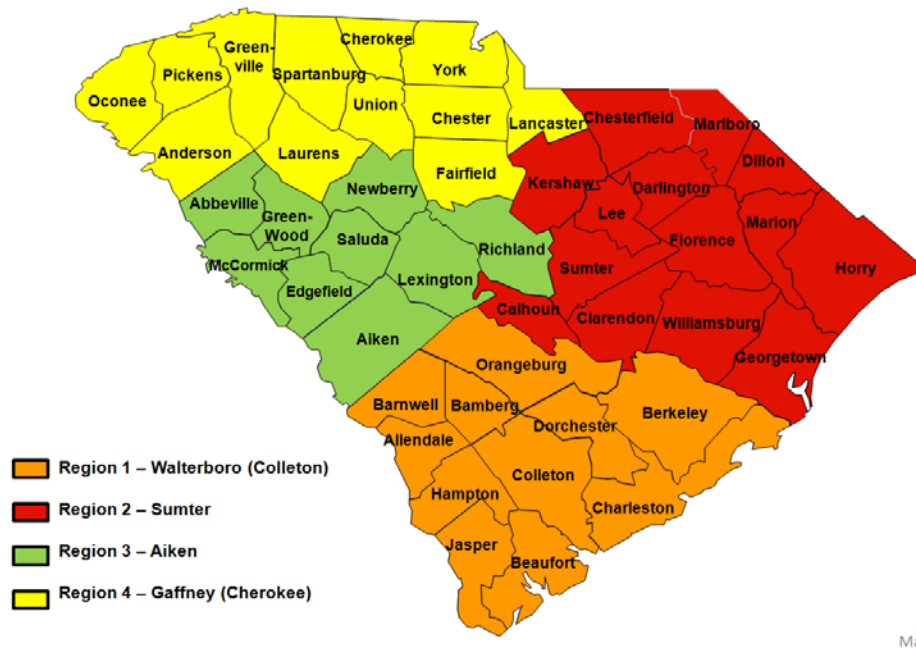
MSFWs will be shown how to use SCWOS, an Internet-based workforce data management and service delivery system. Through SCWOS, MSFWs can establish a Wagner-Peyser application and apply for jobs.

D. Services Provided to Agricultural Employers through the SC Works Centers System

Last year 145 agricultural job orders, which may include multiple job openings, were received and filled through the SC Works Centers delivery system. Interstate clearance orders received totaled 42. In the upcoming year, 150 job orders are expected to be received and filled. South Carolina should receive approximately 50 interstate clearance orders in PY 2012.

Extensive outreach to agricultural employers is an on-going process. This is critical to maintaining interpersonal contact with the employers. Employers are contacted by Rural Manpower Coordinators operating out of four SC Works Centers strategically located throughout the state. The map below displays the geographical areas covered by each coordinator.

Rural Manpower Service Regions



Examples of services provided to agricultural employers by SCDEW staff include:

- Local, regional and national recruitment assistance
- Screening job applicants
- Provision of information such as crop conditions, labor supply, and labor market information
- Connection and coordination of services with government and community agencies
- Technical assistance with Foreign Labor Certification
- Soliciting and filling job orders
- Disseminating information on farm-related rules and regulations
- Registering of farm labor contractors
- Conducting prevailing wage and practice surveys
- Providing consultant inspections of migrant housing
- Referring complaints to proper enforcement agencies

Many contacts with agricultural employers are made as a result of referrals from other agencies such as the SC Department of Agriculture and Clemson University as well as by word-of-mouth from other workers or farmers. SCDEW, along with partners, host periodic grower meetings to inform agricultural employers of services available through the state workforce system. Intensive efforts will be made in the upcoming year to increase the market penetration of agricultural employers.

The most basic service provided to agricultural employers is the filling of job openings. Job orders from agricultural employers are entered in SCWOS and qualified candidates are referred. All H-2A order users are mandated to take all qualified United States referrals through the workforce system. Rural Manpower in particular strives to refer local applicants to all H-2A orders through community contacts and referrals. In addition, training has been provided to SC Works Center staff throughout the state to encourage local domestic US workers to apply for H-2A jobs.

Other services include the certification and renewals of certification for farm labor contractors and housing inspections of both H-2A and MSFW camps. The Rural Manpower coordinators also perform field checks and communicate with the Chicago National Processing Center in addressing matters relative to any H-2A deficiencies. They also provide critical coordination services by moving MSFW crews to the growers at the appropriate times.

E. Other Requirements

Statement of Approval of the State Monitor Advocate:

In accordance with 20 CFR Subpart B, 653.107, the State Monitor Advocate participated in the preparation of the agricultural plan and has been afforded the opportunity to approve and comment on the plan. Recommendations from the Annual MSFW Summary have been included in this plan.

Review and Comment by WIA Section 167 Grantee:

In accordance with 20 CFR 653.107 (d), WIA Section 167 grantees and other appropriate MSFW organizations and stakeholders have been afforded the opportunity to comment on this Agricultural Outreach Plan.